

Message Text

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S-S-MR ACKERBOM (SUBS)

SCA-MR ANTIPPAS (SUBS)

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A/BF-MR MURRAY (SUBS)

EA-MR MILLER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

JCRC BARBERS PT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 187104

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PFOR, VN, VS

SUBJECT: AMERICANS IN VIET-NAM

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REFS: 1. BANGKOK 21273; 2. STATE 169323;

3. STATE 184924

1. WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD DEFER TO UNHCR ON RELEASE OF NAMES TO PRESS. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS TO US PREFERABLE NOT TO PUBLICIZE LIST UNTIL AMERICANS ACTUALLY ARRIVE IN BANGKOK. WE AND AMERICAN RED CROSS HAVE INFORMED RELATIVES TO EXTENT WE KNOW THEM (AS REPORTED IN REF 2 AND IN COMING SEPTTEL), AND WE BELIEVE RELATIVES AT THIS STAGE WOULD PREFER TO AVOID THE MEDIA ATTENTION WHICH MAY FOCUS ON THEM WHEN THE NAMES ARE KNOWN. SINCE THERE COULD BE DELAYS, WE WOULD RECOMMEND AGAINST GIVING NAMES TO NEW YORK TIMES ETC. ON A HOLD FOR RELEASE BASIS.

2. DEPT HAS PROMISED SELECT COMMITTEE AND MIA LEAGUE OF FAMILIES THAT THOSE ARRIVING FROM SVN WOULD BE CAREFULLY DEBRIEFED FOR POSSIBLE INFO ON MIA'S AND OTHER AMERICANS IN VIET-NAM, BOTH WARTIME AND POST-EVACUATION. TO FACILITATE DEBRIEFING AS WELL AS NECESSARY CONSULAR PROCESSING, EMBASSY MAY WISH TO CONSIDER ARRANGING FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR THE GROUP IN A CENTRALIZED LOCATION WITHOUT CHARGE TO RETURNEES. IF YMCA IS NOT SUITABLE FOR THIS, COULD THIS BE DONE IN SOME OTHER FACILITY? OBVIOUSLY, THOSE WHO HAVE FUNDS AND PREFER TO MAKE PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE FREE TO DO SO, BUT WE SEE ADVANTAGE FOR DEBRIEFING AS WELL AS MEDIA RELATIONS IN PROVIDING SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT.

3. WE HAVE SUGGESTED TO DOD THAT JCRC LIAISON PERSONNEL ASSIST IN DEBRIEFING TO EXTENT EMBASSY CONSIDERS THIS USEFUL. PERHAPS SOME OF THE FILIPINO'S ALSO COULD BE DEBRIEFED TO EXTENT FEASIBLE.

4. OF THE AMERICANS ON THE LIST, GAY, COOPER AND MACDONALD (AND PERHAPS BENNETT) WERE AT VARIOUS TIMES REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED BY VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES, AND MIGHT BE LIKELY SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ABOUT POW'S AND AMERICANS IN PRISON. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED REPORTS THAT TUCKER GOUGLEMANN, WHO IS NOT ON LIST, IS IN PRISON IN SVN, AND WOULD BE INTERESTED

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IN ANY INFORMATION ON HIS WHEREABOUTS OR CONDITION.

5. AMONG OTHER RUMORS, WE HAVE SEEN UNCONFIRMED REPORTS OF AN AMERICAN BODY NEAR THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON FOLLOWING THE EVACUATION, OF AMERICAN PRISONERS HAVING BEEN EXECUTED IN CHAU DOC, AND OF SEVERAL AMERICANS IMPRISONED IN LONG XUYEN SINCE THE FALL OF SAIGON.

WHILE WE DISCOUNT MOST OF THESE REPORTS, EMBASSY SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY ALERT FOR INFORMATION CORROBORATING OR DENYING THESE STORIES.

6. ALSO ON DEBRIEFING, WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING IF THE RETURNEES HAVE INFO ON VIETNAMESE PARENTS IN SVN OF THE "BABYLIFT" CHILDREN WHO CAME TO US IN EARLY 1975, WHO ARE SUBJECT OF CONTINUED LITIGATION IN US DISTRICT COURT IN CALIFORNIA. ICRC HAS ADVISED THAT IT HAS HAD NO RESPONSE TO ITS INTERVENTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT IN SVN, AND IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO KNOW IF ANY OF THE RETURNEES WERE EVER CONTACTED BY VIETNAMESE PARENTS CONCERNING THESE CHILDREN.

7. SINCE RELATIVES IN US DO NOT KNOW ONWARD TRAVEL PLANS, WE SUGGEST RETURNEES DISCUSS THESE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THEM BY TELEPHONE AFTER ARRIVAL IN BANGKOK. EMBASSY FACILITIES MAY BE USED TO SEND DIRECT REPLY CABLE TO FAMILY, FRIENDS, ETC. WHO MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FUNDS. WE UNDERSTAND BANGKOK PREFERS THAT BANK OF AMERICA BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE RATHER THAN SCS/TRUST PROCEDURES. PURSUANT TO PRIVACY ACT, REQUEST EMBASSY OBTAIN RETURNEES PERMISSION FOR DEPT TO CONTACT RELATIVES ON THEIR BEHALF.

8. FISCAL INFO AND REPATRIATION LOAN INFORMATION IS COMING BY SEPTEL. KISSINGER

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